

The President's Daily Brief

7 February 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

China's country-wide defense preparations include some positions in Manchuria near the Soviet border. (Page 1)

Israel may be tempted to launch new air strikes near Cairo this weekend during the meeting of the Arab states involved in the war. (Page 2)

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Brezhnev and Kosygin may participate in the talks with fedayeen leader Yasir Arafat during the latter's forthcoming visit to Moscow. (Page 4)

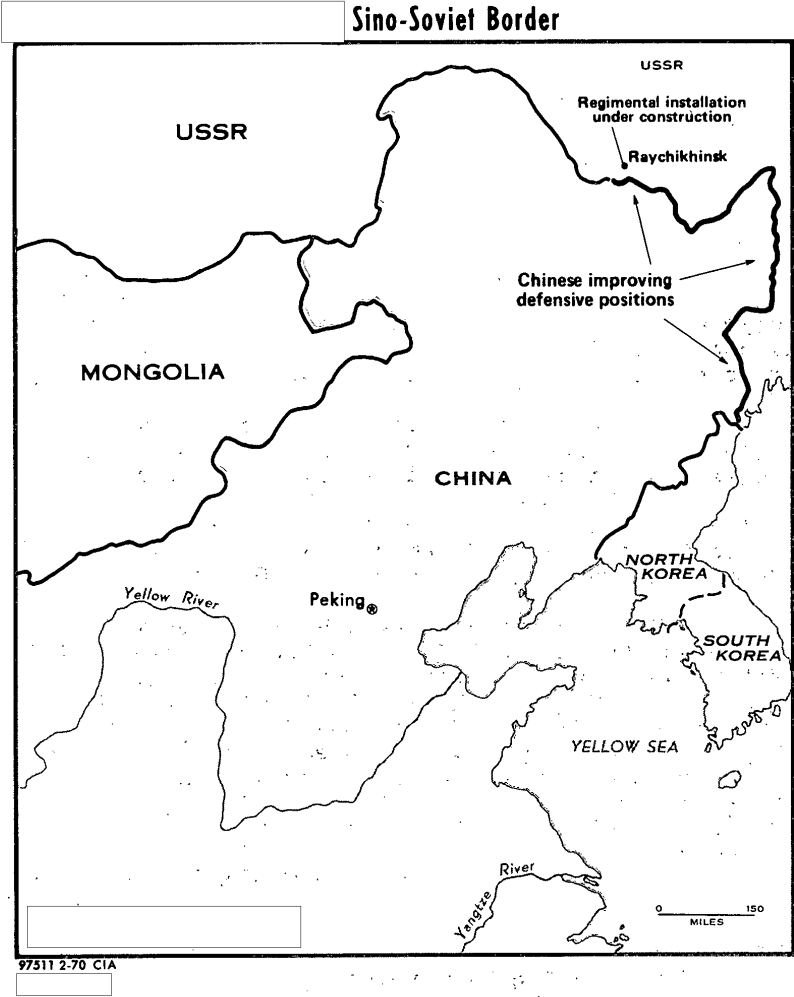
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COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

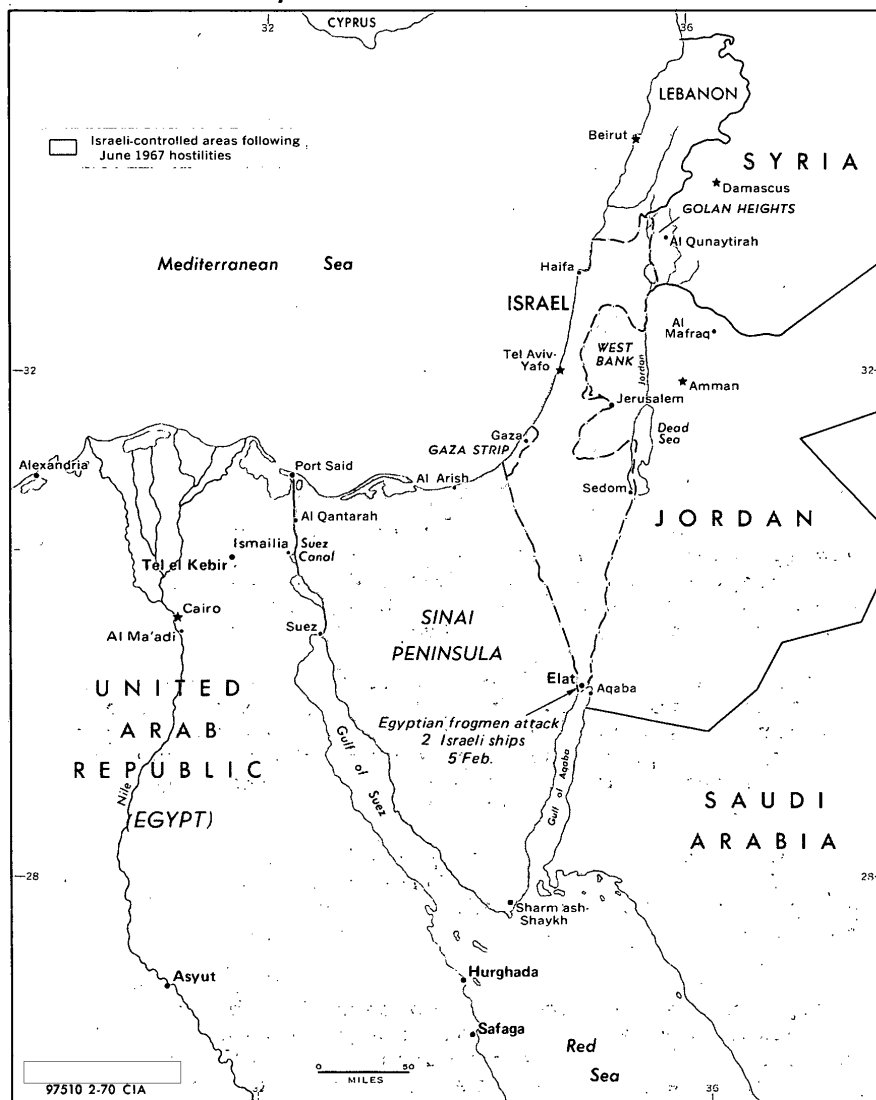
Peking has improved its defensive positions in Manchuria near the Soviet border. Satellite photography shows at least 30 tent camps and associated trenches and artillery positions at various locations near the border. These probably have been established since the bloody clashes on Damansky-Chenpao Island in March 1969.

Such developments probably are an extension of defensive preparations observed throughout the country. We have not identified regular ground force redeployments in these areas.

The Soviets meanwhile are constructing a new regimental installation at Raychikhinsk about 27 miles from the border. This was begun last summer and probably will be used in fleshing out existing divisions rather than as the base for a new division.

In their deliberate buildup on the border, the Soviets have increased their ground forces from an understrength 14 divisions in 1965 to 28 at present. Another six are in the process of formation.

Israeli Retaliatory Air Strikes 6 February



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ISRAEL-EGYPT

Israeli spokesmen announced yesterday that Israeli pilots had sunk an Egyptian minelaying vessel of the T-43 class in the Gulf of Suez. They have made new air strikes at Egyptian military camps and storage installations at Tel el Kebir, 30 miles west of Ismailia, and again deep into the Nile Valley near Asyut, some 200 miles south of Cairo. Israeli aircraft also attacked the northern sector of the canal, following an Egyptian cross-canal commando raid on 5 February. Cairo announced that the two Egyptian Red Sea naval bases at Hurghada and Safaga also suffered air attacks.

It seems unlikely that the Israelis will ease up on Nasir by refraining from air attacks close to Cairo, even though they have not done so since their raid on Maadi on 28 January. Indeed, this weekend's meeting of the "front-line" Arab states in Cairo may prove too tempting to the Israelis.

Nasir is not expected to react in any dramatic manner to the Israeli reprisal raids. He may, however, initiate heavier artillery barrages along the Suez Canal or send his aircraft on further isolated bombing runs against Israeli targets in the Sinai.

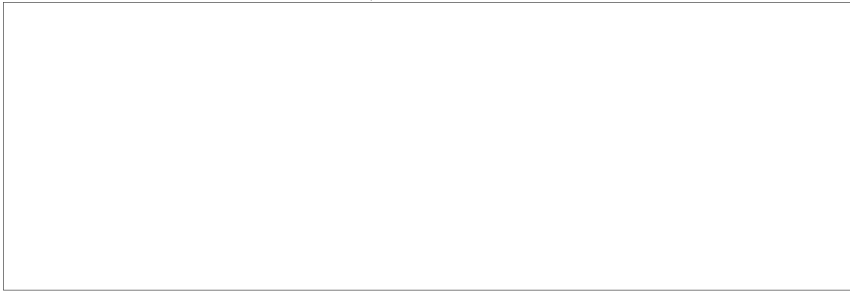
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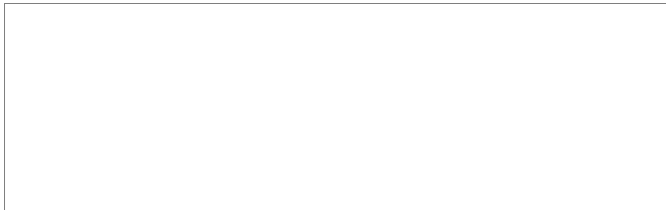
POLAND - WEST GERMANY



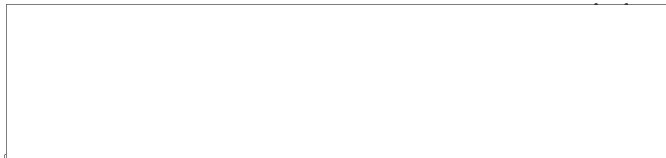
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USSR - ARAB STATES

Cairo's semi-official newspaper Al Ahram claims that Brezhnev and Kosygin will sit in on talks with the fedayeen delegation led by Yasir Arafat. The delegation is expected in Moscow in a few days.

Aside from the usual pleas for military assistance, Arafat is also seeking political recognition for his guerrilla organization, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

If Al Ahram is right and the Soviet leaders meet with Arafat, the talks will provide a degree of legitimacy for the Palestine revolutionaries. Kosygin gave public approval to the fedayeen's "just national liberation struggle" last December, but he did not single out Arafat alone. We expect that some increase of Soviet small arms and funds for the fedayeen in general is in the works. But we think that Moscow will continue to deliver this through front organizations or Arab governments.

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LIBYA



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